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Governing Sustainable Tourism of Small Islands in Makassar, Indonesia and the Visayas, Philippines

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Abstract

The tourism industry in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia and the Philippines, is growing rapidly. This research analyzes sustainable tourism management on small islands in Makassar, Indonesia, and the Visayas, Philippines. This research uses a descriptive-qualitative approach carried out by a literature study. The results showed that Visayas has a more advanced ecotourism management system with strict regulations related to environmental protection, implementation of zero-waste programs, and strengthening community participation in community-based ecotourism. On the other hand, Makassar City still faces challenges in tourism management, especially in aspects of environmental conservation, equitable distribution of economic benefits, and the development of infrastructure and facilities that support tourism sustainability. The level of environmental awareness among communities and tourists in Visayas is higher compared to Makassar, which is influenced by conservation education programs and the active participation of local communities. Therefore, this study recommends improving environmental regulations, developing community-based ecotourism, and optimizing tourism infrastructure in Makassar so that the tourism sector can develop sustainably. Future research can explore the best policy models in island tourism management, long-term impacts on ecosystems, and the use of technology in improving tourism sustainability in coastal and island areas.

Keywords

Governing; Sustainable tourism; Environmental management; Community participation

Introduction

Tourism development is currently directed towards sustainable development (Sayuti, 2023; Tamrin, Lubis and Musleh, 2024; Younus *et al*., 2025a). It is caused sustainable tourism development

policies are directed at using natural resources and human resources for the long-term (Jermsittiparsert *et al.*, 2021; Junus, Harun and Napir, 2024; Kurniawan *et al*., 2019; Sriyakul *et al.,* 2019). Tourism is seen as a generator of employment and economic growth. Tourism activities' primary purpose is to obtain pleasure or eliminate feelings of pressure due to work routines (Setijawan, 2018). In this condition, acquiring satisfaction from activities carried out by tourists is very important (Manggala, Widanti and Wiadnyani, 2024). Tourism is one of the potentials that is now widely explored and developed in many countries (Prianto *et al.,* 2023; Setijawan, 2018). Tourism can be considered an ecosystem service, namely cultural ecosystem services. There is an increasing trend in the international tourism market to travel in unspoiled areas (Prianto *et al.,* 2024; Teguh, 2024). This trend provides more sustainable tourism development opportunities, especially on small islands with unique attractions and high biodiversity (Hajar, Faustyna and Kholik, 2022; Silva and Roque, 2024). However, improper management can adversely affect the environment and the lives of local communities (Añasco *et al*., 2021; Chienwattanasook and Prianto, 2018; Jermsittiparsert *et al.,* 2019).

Sustainable tourism is a significant concern in destination management, especially in small islands vulnerable to environmental and social impacts (Fakfare *et al*., 2024; Younus *et al*., 2025b). Small islands contribute to global and local tourism markets. Small islands characterize archipelagic countries and often have high biodiversity (Añasco *et al*., 2021; Pecheniuk *et al*., 2025). Small islands have unique environmental characteristics that make them vulnerable or susceptible to natural and human-induced disasters (Asrial *et al.,* 2021; Sayuti, 2023). Sustainable tourism management on small islands is challenging, especially in balancing economic utilization and environmental sustainability (Fang *et al*., 2024; Halunko, 2024; Ostapenko *et al*., 2024).

Small islands in Makassar City, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines, have great potential in the tourism industry with their natural beauty and biodiversity, attracting domestic and international tourists (Ranieri *et al*., 2024). Makassar City has great potential in the tourism sector with its natural beauty, which includes exotic beaches, rich marine ecosystems, and fascinating cultural heritage (Rohana and Wahyuni, 2019). The existence of small islands around Makassar City, such as Samalona Island and Kodingareng Keke Island, is a major attraction for tourists (Prakasa, Sawu and Ulinuha, 2023). Makassar City has an area of approximately 175.8 km², which includes land and water areas that support the tourism sector. However, the main challenge in developing tourism in this region is balancing natural resource exploitation and environmental conservation (Asmal, 2016; Hakim, Razak and` Prianto, 2023; Kurniawan *et al*., 2023). In the absence of a sustainable management strategy, overexploitation can damage coastal and marine ecosystems, which in turn can threaten the sustainability of the tourism sector itself (Kasim *et al*., 2021).

The Visayas has enormous tourism potential with its tropical natural beauty, especially in areas such as Cebu, Bohol, and Boracay, famous for their white sand beaches and biodiversity (Fernandez-Abila *et al*., 2024). As one of the major tourist destinations in the Philippines, the Visayas covers an area of approximately 61,077 km², consisting of numerous small islands with unique ecological characteristics (Fang *et al*., 2024). However, like Makassar, the challenge in tourism management in the Visayas lies in maintaining environmental sustainability while developing the tourism sector to drive

economic growth (Segarra *et al*., 2024). Sustainable tourism management is critical in ensuring that tourist destinations in these two regions can continue to grow without compromising the ecosystems that are their main assets (Arifin *et al*., 2024).

Research on Sustainable Tourism has been done a lot, including Research from Espiritu, Jane and Lawas (2019), which discusses Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities in Sustainable Tourism Development in Central Visayas: Specific and Common Concerns of Cebu and Bohol. The results showed that sustainable tourism expansion and development provide an impetus for job creation and consequently bring opportunities to increase income among the Cebuano workforce living in rural areas and coastal destinations where tourism activities are located. Research conducted discusses Measuring Small Island Disaster Resilience Towards Sustainable Coastal and Fisheries Tourism: The Case of Guimaras, Philippines. The study results show that globally growing sun, sand, and sea-based tourism encourages community resilience in small island destinations such as Guimaras. This contributes to sustainable development by making tourism an alternative source of livelihood while reducing pressure on overexploited fish stocks. Then, Research from Kurniawan *et al*. (2019), Subair, Prianto and Amri (2025), Tsolocto (2025), Rengganis *et al*. (2023) and Yuslaini *et al*. (2023) discusses the social-ecological status of small islands: An evaluation of island tourism destination management in Indonesia. The results showed that tourism development and ecosystem management are still not balanced, where tourism development efforts have not been fully accompanied by adequate environmental management.

The natural environment strongly influences tourism development, but tourism also hurts the environment, as demonstrated by the lack of appropriate sustainable development strategies. Poorly managed tourism activities can lead to overexploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution, and ecosystem degradation. For example, developing tourism infrastructure that does not consider the environment's carrying capacity can damage coastal and marine ecosystems, such as coral reefs, through uncontrolled snorkeling and diving activities. In addition, an increase in the number of tourists without an adequate waste management system can create water and soil pollution, thus threatening environmental sustainability and ecosystem balance in these tourist destinations. This problem is further exacerbated by climate change, which causes rising sea levels and coastal erosion, which in turn can impact tourism's attractiveness and local communities' welfare. Therefore, based on the background of the problem, this study aims to analyze how sustainable tourism management is implemented in small islands in Makassar, Indonesia, as well as in the Visayas, Philippines.

This introduction aims to explain the rationale and urgency of research on governing sustainable tourism on small islands. This highlights the negative impacts of uncontrolled tourism on the natural environment, such as resource exploitation, pollution, and ecosystem degradation. Additionally, this introduction highlights how climate change exacerbates the vulnerability of small island destinations, which in turn can affect tourism appeal and the well-being of local communities. The rationale for this study is related to the potential and specific characteristics of small islands and the critical importance of tourism to their economies, as well as the challenges emerging from tourism sector interactions, such as high dependence on tourism, socio-ecological vulnerability, and complex governance. The specific objectives of this study are to

analyze policies and governance, evaluate impacts, identify development opportunities, and formulate policy recommendations of sustainable tourism governance on the small islands of Makassar, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines.

Methodology

This research explores critical aspects of governing sustainable tourism in the context of small islands, specifically focusing on islands in Makassar, Indonesia, and the Visayas region of the Philippines. The research aims to understand the mechanisms, challenges, and successes in implementing sustainable tourism governance practices, taking into account the unique socio-economic, environmental, and cultural vulnerabilities of these small island destinations. Through comparing and contrasting approaches in these two distinct geographical locations, the study seeks to identify best practices and provide policy recommendations to foster resilient and responsible tourism development that benefits local communities and conserves natural resources.

This research uses a qualitative explanatory approach that prioritizes literature studies. Previous research studies are used as a reference source for the author in reviewing and answering the problem formulation stated. Furthermore, the author also uses articles, news, and official websites related to Sustainable Tourism Governance in Makassar City, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines.

Authorized tourism websites, such as those maintained by tourism ministries or departments (e.g., Wonderful Indonesia, by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and it's more fun in the Philippines, by the Department of Tourism of the Philippines), as well as local Tourism Offices and Agencies, are highly credible and authoritative data sources for tourism-related information. The data collected and compiled includes official statistics on the number of visitors, tourism regulations, destination development policies, licensed tour operator lists, official accommodation information, event calendars, and tourism-related information disclosure. The information's validity is confirmed as it is published directly by the appropriate authorities, providing a strong and reliable foundation for verifiable tourism data analysis.

The previous research sources originated from publications in peer-reviewed journals focused on sustainable tourism, regional development, governance studies, or Southeast Asian studies, such as university-affiliated journals (e.g., journals associated with the University in Makassar or universities in the Visayas) or leading international publishers in these areas of tourism governance. The research employs content analysis as its data analysis technique. This technique examines data from various sources in depth to identify patterns, trends, and challenges in sustainable tourism management in both regions.

In this study, content analysis has been utilized as the main method for data analysis. This method systematically categorizes and interprets collected and compiled qualitative data, hence enabling the identification of recurring themes, patterns, and meanings in textual or visual content. Thoroughly breaking down data sources into manageable units and applying a consistent coding framework, content analysis facilitates objective and verifiable examination of information, which ultimately leads to a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon.

Further improving the quality of this methodology, the data source triangulation strategy is strengthened by systematically comparing and confirming findings obtained from scientific literature, official government websites, and media reports. This helps validate the consistency and reliability of the information. Furthermore, a more detailed explanation of the coding framework used in content analysis, including examples of anticipated categories or main themes, will increase the transparency and replicability of the study. Finally, despite its qualitative focus, reflecting on researcher bias in data interpretation and the steps taken to mitigate it, such as through discussions with fellow researchers or cross-verification of interpretations, will further strengthen the objectivity and credibility of the findings.

Result and Discussion

The development of the tourism sector in Indonesia is governed by several key policy documents, which reflect a commitment to sustainable tourism development and providing benefits to local communities.

- Law No. 10 of 2009 on Tourism: This is the primary legal document governing all tourism-related matters in Indonesia, including planning, destination development, the tourism industry, marketing, and institutional matters. The law also emphasizes the importance of sustainable tourism and community empowerment.
- The Government Regulation No. 50 of 2011 on the National Tourism Development Master Plan (NTDMP) for the period 2010-2025: This document serves as a long-term roadmap for national tourism development. The NTDMP establishes the vision, mission, objectives, and strategies for tourism development in Indonesia, encompassing four key pillars: destinations, marketing, industry, and tourism institutions. This document also guides the formulation of Local Tourism Development Master Plans at the provincial and regency/city levels.
- Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulations: The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy has released a couple of more specific ministerial regulations to implement tourism policies. An example of this includes: (1) Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulation No. 9 of 2021 concerning Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism Destinations. This regulation provides comprehensive guidelines on the sustainable management of tourism destinations, including economic, cultural, and environmental aspects; (2) Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulation No. 2 of 2024 concerning the Implementation of the National Tourism Development Index: This document regulates how the tourism development index is measured and used to monitor progress in the tourism sector; (3.) Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy Regulation No. 11 of 2022 concerning the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy: This document outlines the ministry's strategic plan for a specific period, including adaptation to new challenges and opportunities, such as post-COVID-19 pandemic.

The Philippines also has a structured policy framework to drive the development of its tourism sector, with a focus on inclusive and sustainable growth.

- Republic Act No. 9593 (Tourism Act of 2009): This law is the comprehensive legal framework for the development, promotion, and regulation of tourism in the Philippines. It establishes the Department of Tourism (DOT) as the main agency

responsible for tourism development and sets out various incentives and guidelines for tourism investment.

- National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP): This is the Philippines' primary strategic planning document for the tourism sector. Currently, the relevant plan is the National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP) 2023-2028. The NTDP serves as a blueprint outlining the strategies and actions required to achieve national tourism objectives, including positioning ASEAN as a premier tourism destination.

Sustainable tourism governance on small islands like those in Makassar and the Visayas is a complex task that involves multiple stakeholders in balancing economic growth from tourism with environmental protection and the social well-being of local communities. Key governance challenges include limited local government capacity, traditional land ownership conflicts, lack of inter-agency coordination, issues related to waste and clean water, and weak participation of local communities in decision-making. The small island's geographical condition, which is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters, further complicates effective governance efforts. Therefore, a holistic and integrated approach involving the government, private sector, communities, academia, and media is needed to create a strong framework. Islands have unique geographical and ecological characteristics, making them centers of biodiversity and leading tourism destinations that contribute significantly to local and national economies. Their natural beauty, such as white sandy beaches, coral reefs rich in marine life, and distinctive maritime culture, makes the islands a significant attraction for domestic and international travelers. However, behind this potential are various challenges in tourism management, especially related to ecosystem sustainability and the welfare of local communities. Unsustainable management can lead to environmental degradation, such as coral reef damage due to uncontrolled tourism activities, marine pollution, and over-exploitation of natural resources. To achieve economic benefits from tourism without compromising environmental sustainability and local culture, a comprehensive sustainability-based management strategy is essential.

Figure 1: Spermonde Map of Makassar City
(*Source:* Googel Earth in Makassar City in Figure, Central Statistics Agency, 2024)

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Figure 1 shows the Spermonde archipelago in the waters of Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The archipelago consists of dozens of small islands spread across the Makassar Strait, ranging from inhabited to conservation islands. This map also displays the administrative boundaries of Makassar City, Maros Regency, Takalar Regency, and Gowa Regency. Some islands known as marine tourism destinations in this region include Samalona Island, Kodingareng Keke Island, and Lae-Lae Island. Apart from being a tourist destination, this region is also important for marine ecosystems because it has a coral reef ecosystem and a habitat for various aquatic species.

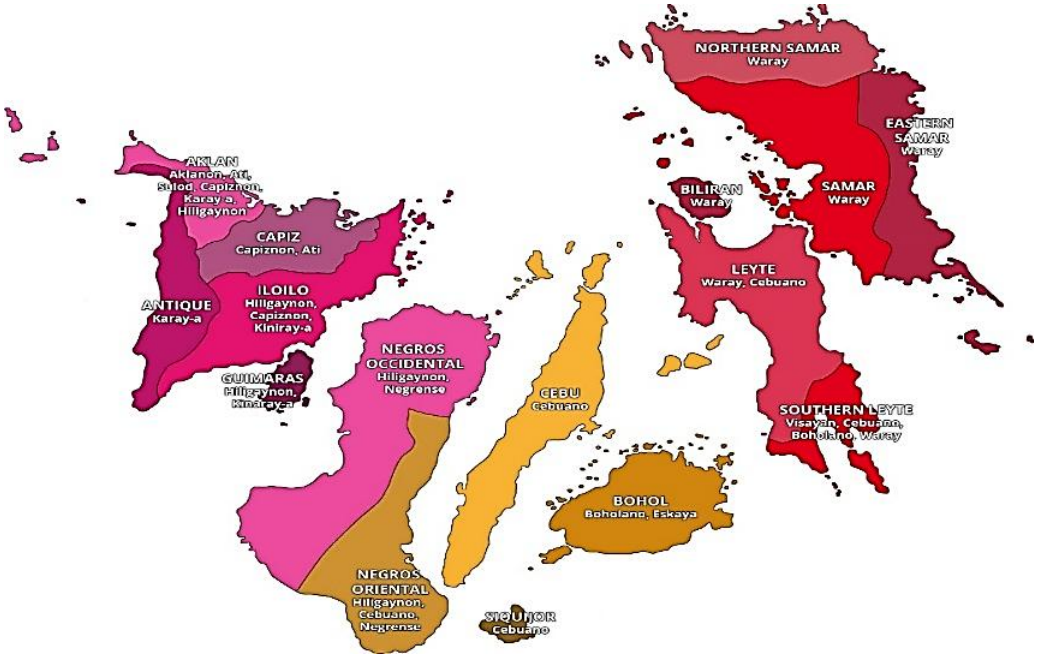

Figure 2: Map of Visayas, Philippines (Source: http://www.ethnicgroupsphilippines.com/philippines-profile/map/map-of-visayas/)

Figure 2 shows the Visayas archipelago, one of the three central regions in the Philippines, besides Luzon and Mindanao. The region consists of provinces such as Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental, Negros Occidental, Iloilo, Leyte, and Samar. The map also shows the main languages spoken in each province, such as Cebuano in Cebu and Bohol, and Waray in Samar and Leyte. The Visayas have a more varied topography than the Spermonde Islands, with a combination of lowlands, mountains, and coastal areas. Besides being famous for beach tourism, the Visayas has ecotourism destinations based on tropical forests, caves, and protected coral reefs. As one of the economic and tourism hubs of the Philippines, this region features a more developed infrastructure compared to the Spermonde Islands, with both sea and air transport systems connecting the islands.

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Table 1: List of Small Islands in Makassar City

No.	*Island Name*	*Area (Approx)*	*Characteristics*	*Main Attractions*	*Facilities*
1.	Pulau Samalona	±2,34 hectares	It is a small island with white sand and coral reefs rich in biodiversity	Coastal scenery, underwater beauty, and World War II shipwrecks.	Lodging, rinse rooms, stalls, and diving and snorkeling equipment rentals and guides.
2.	Pulau Lae-Lae	±6 hectares	An inhabited island with a natural atmosphere close to the city	Charming sea view, Sunset view, Swimming and Snorkeling, Cultural tourism, Historical tourism	Toilets, Parking lots, Food stalls, Cafeteria, Photo spots, Facilities for worship, Lodging, Game rides
3.	Pulau Khayangan	±1 hectares	Tourist islands developed as recreational destinations	White sand beach, Ocean view,	Lodging, Hall, Camping, Restaurant, Function building, Children's playground, Sport facilities, Fishing platform
4.	Pulau Kodingareng Keke	±1 hectares	Fishing islands with white sandy beaches and underwater beauty	View of Makassar city lights at night, Snorkeling	Bathrooms, Gazebo for resting, Rental of snorkeling equipment, diving equipment, hammocks, and mats, Photo spots, such as piers, Swimming spots by the beach

(*Source:* Makassar City in Figure, 2024)

Table 1 explains that the small islands in Makassar City have great potential to be developed as a leading tourist destination. The uniqueness of each island, ranging from underwater beauty on Samalona Island, cultural and historical tourism on Lae-Lae Island, modern recreational facilities on Khayangan Island, to the exotic atmosphere on Kodingareng Keke Island, is the main attraction for local and foreign tourists. Strategic planning in tourism management and promotion is required to optimize this potential. Infrastructure improvements, such as better jetties, organized sea transportation routes, and supporting facilities such as accommodation and tourist information centers, can improve tourist comfort. Ecotourism-based tourism development also needs to be considered to maintain environmental sustainability, especially in coral reef ecosystems and marine biota, which are the main attractions on some of these islands. Marketing

and promotion strategies are also essential in developing the tourism potential of small islands in Makassar. The local government and tourism industry players can utilize digital technology to increase the visibility of these destinations through social media, travel platforms, and cooperation with travel agents. Annual events such as marine festivals, snorkeling, and diving competitions can attract more tourists and increase the competitiveness of Makassar's tourism destinations with other regions. The engagement of local communities in tourism management must be enhanced, whether by training tour guides, managing homestays, or developing local products like culinary specialties and souvenirs. With sustainable and innovative management, Makassar's small islands can become tourist destinations that are not only attractive but also provide economic benefits for local communities and preserve their natural environment. This can be realized by implementing strict regulations on tourism activities that have the potential to damage the environment, as well as increasing tourists' awareness of the importance of marine ecosystem conservation.

Table 2: List of Small Islands in Visayas, Philippines

No.	*Island Name*	*Area (Approx)*	*Characteristics*	*Main Attractions*	*Facilities*
1.	Boracay	±10.3 km²	Small island with white sand and bustling nightlife	White Beach, beautiful sunset, water activities, nightlife	Resort, beach, and outdoor activities
2.	Bohol	±4,820 km²	It is a big island with unique landscapes and a rich culture	Chocolate Hills, Tarsier Sanctuary, Alona Beach	Swimming pool, Airport shuttle, Car park, Shuttle service, Free WiFi, BBQ facilities, Luggage storage, Fitness center
3.	Cebu	±4,943 km²	A central peninsula with beaches, waterfalls, and historical sites	Falls area, diving at Moalboal & Malapascua	Water park, accommodation, and shopping center.
4.	Siquijor	±337 km²	Exotic islands known for mystical myths and beautiful beaches	Salagdoong Beach, Cambugahay Falls, cultural tourism	Exclusive guest rooms, Lobby, Restaurant, Bar, beach, Air conditioning, Refrigerator, Seating area
5.	Gigantes Islands	±24 km² (keseluruhan kepulauan)	Remote islands with white sand and coral cliffs	Hidden beaches, natural lagoons, snorkeling	White sandy beach, natural lagoon pool, limestone formations, and camping grounds.

Sources: https://www.britannica.com/place/Visayan-Islands

Table 2 explains that the small islands in the Visayas region of the Philippines offer a variety of unique tourism experiences with diverse natural and cultural characteristics. Boracay is the most popular tourist destination with its White Beach, lively nightlife, and water activities appealing to domestic and international travelers. With its extensive resort facilities, Boracay is a top choice for travelers seeking natural beauty and modern entertainment. Bohol and Cebu, though more extensive in area, are still categorized as the top tourist destinations in the Visayas archipelago. Bohol is known for its unique Chocolate Hills landscape and Tarsier conservation, while Cebu offers world-class diving experiences, exotic waterfalls, and rich historical sites. Both islands have more developed tourist infrastructure, including airport shuttle services, fitness centers, and shopping malls, making it easy for travelers to get around.

Meanwhile, Siquijor and Gigantes Islands offer a more exotic and close-to-nature travel experience. Siquijor is famous for its beautiful beaches and mystical myths that attract travelers looking for a unique experience. The island has adequate accommodation facilities, including exclusive guest rooms, restaurants, and bars. The Gigantes Islands are better known as an adventure tourism destination with hidden beaches, natural lagoons, and stunning limestone formations. Unlike Boracay or Cebu, which have modern facilities, the Gigantes Islands are more suitable for tourists who like nature tourism with activities such as snorkeling and camping. To improve the competitiveness of tourist destinations in the Visayas, it is necessary to develop sustainable tourism potential by paying attention to environmental aspects, infrastructure, and tourism promotion. Accessibility improvements, such as more efficient sea and air transport, can support tourism growth in less developed islands like the Gigantes Islands and Siquijor. Sustainable environmental management should be a priority, especially in ecotourism-dependent destinations such as Bohol and Cebu. This can be done through strict waste management regulations, coral reef conservation, and tourism education on the importance of preserving nature. On the other hand, strengthening the local economy also needs to be a concern for tourism development in Visayas. The government and businesses can empower local communities by involving them in the tourism industry, for example, through homestay programs, providing tour guide services, and promoting regional cultural and culinary products. In addition, the use of digital technology in tourism promotion, such as marketing through social media, creating travel apps, and virtual reality-based tourism campaigns, can increase the interest of global travelers. With the integrated development of infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and community empowerment, small islands in the Visayas can become flagship sustainable tourist destinations with broader appeal.

Table 3: List of tourist visits in Makassar City, Indonesia

Number of Tourist visiting	Years				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	1,580,668	1,889,597	3,430,697	4,074,634	5,524,000

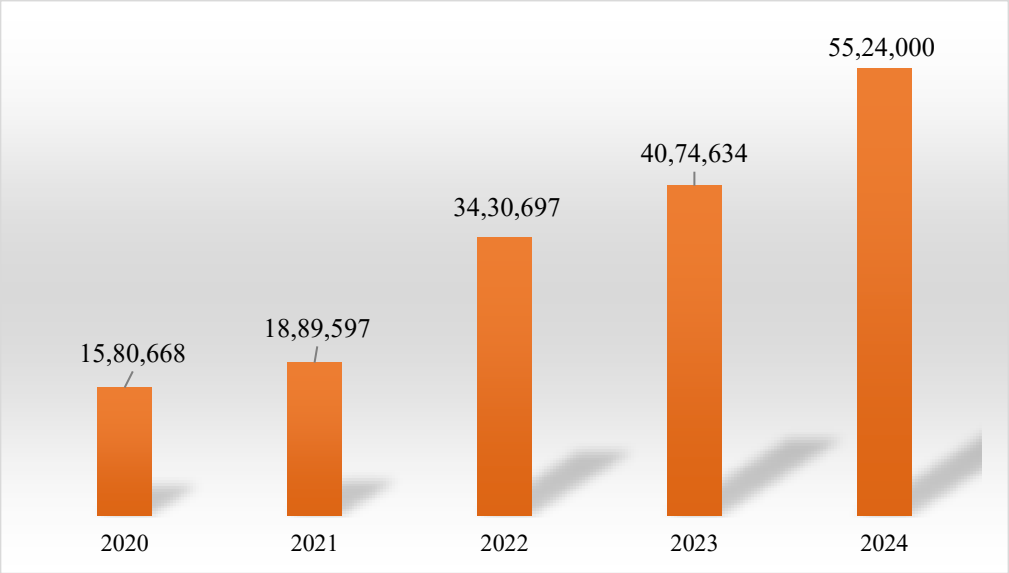

Figure 3: List of tourist visits in Makassar City (*Sources*: https://makassarkota.go.id/potensi/potensi-pariwisata/)

Data in the table 3 and figure 3 explain that the number of tourists visiting Makassar City has increased from 2020 to 2024. In 2020, the number of tourists was recorded at 1,580,668 people, then increased to 1,889,597 in 2021, or around 19.5%. The recovery of the tourism sector most likely influenced this increase after the COVID-19 pandemic. This trend continued with a sharp spike in 2022, where the number of tourists reached 3,430,697 people, experiencing a growth of 81.6% compared to the previous year. This increase can be attributed to the easing of travel policies and the increasing interest of tourists in returning on holiday. Furthermore, in 2023, the number of tourists increased to 4,074,634 people, experiencing a growth of 18.8%. The peak of the increase occurred in 2024, with the number of tourists reaching 5,524,000 people, an increase of 35.6% compared to the previous year. This shows that Makassar City is increasingly becoming an attractive destination for domestic and foreign tourists.

One of the main factors contributing to the increase in the number of tourists in Makassar City is the charm of marine tourism, especially the existence of small islands with unique attractions. Natural beauty, cultural tourism, and recreational facilities that are increasingly developed make the islands around Makassar City a leading tourist destination. Infrastructure development, such as docks, more organized sea transportation routes, and accommodation facilities, needs to be improved to optimize this potential. In addition, digital marketing strategies, cooperation with travel agents, and organizing annual events such as marine festivals can further increase tourist attractiveness. Ecotourism-based management must also be considered to maintain environmental sustainability, especially in aquatic ecosystems, which are the main assets of marine tourism.

Table 4: List of tourist visits in the Philippines

Number of Tourist visiting	Years				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	13,753,000	22,697,000	374,346,000	514,416,000	520,549,000

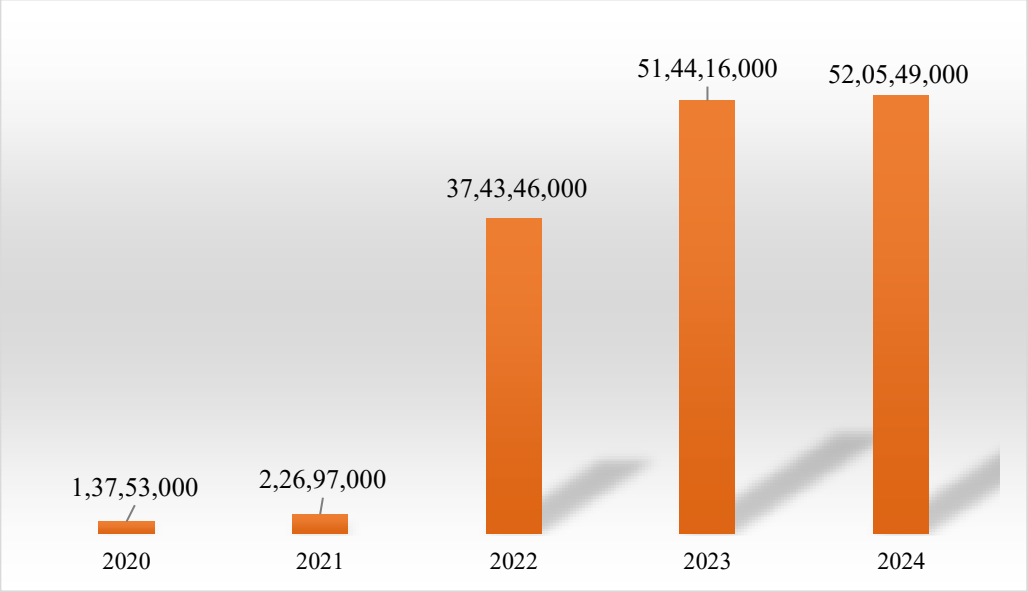

Figure 4: List of tourist visits in Filipina (*Source*: https://www.statista.com/statistics/1053908/philippines-number-of-foreign-visitor-tourist-arrivals/)

Data in table 4 and figure 4 show that the number of tourist visits in the Philippines experienced significant growth from 2020 to 2024. In 2020, the number of tourists was recorded at 13,753,000 people, then increased to 22,697,000 people in 2021, an increase of around 65.1%. This growth is most likely due to the recovery of the tourism sector after travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic began to be relaxed. A drastic increase occurred in 2022, when travelers jumped to 374,346,000 people, showing extremely high growth. This surge can be attributed to various economic recovery policies that boosted the tourism industry, including massive promotions and the reopening of major tourist destinations. In 2023, the number of tourists continued to increase to 514,416,000 people, experiencing a growth of approximately 37.5% from the previous year. The peak came in 2024, when the number of tourists reached 520,549,000 people, although growth began to slow down with an increase of only about 1.2% from the previous year. This shows that the Philippines has reached a plateau in tourist arrivals, with tourism continuing to grow as a key sector of the economy.

One of the main factors supporting the growth of the tourism sector in the Philippines is the attractiveness of small islands, especially in the Visayas region. Islands in the Visayas, such as Boracay, Cebu, and Bohol, have outstanding natural beauty, ranging from white sandy beaches and coral reefs rich in marine life to distinctive and interesting cultures for tourists. The Philippines' success in attracting many tourists is attributed to its aggressive tourism promotion, improved tourism infrastructure, and policies

supporting the sector, such as ecotourism destination development and environmental sustainability. Maritime tourism and nature-based activities, such as diving, snorkeling, and cave exploration, are increasingly popular among domestic and international tourists. Therefore, the Philippine government needs to balance tourism industry development and environmental preservation, especially in small islands vulnerable to the negative impacts of over-tourism.

Table 5: Comparison of Small Island Governance in Makassar, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines

No.	*Comparative Aspects*	*Small Islands in Makassar, Indonesia*	*Small Islands in Visayas, Philippines*
1.	Government Policy	Managed by the Makassar City Government and the South Sulawesi Provincial Government, environmental tourism regulations are still developing.	Local governments have strict policies on environmental conservation and sustainable tourism management.
2.	Environmental Conservation	Conservation efforts are still limited; some islands experience ecosystem degradation due to tourism and development activities.	More advanced, with protected areas such as Apo Island, which has strict regulations regarding coral reef protection.
3.	Waste Management	The waste management systems are not optimal; plastic pollution is still in some tourist destinations.	Zero-waste programs are more active on some islands, with education to communities and tourists.
4.	Community Participation	Local communities are involved in the tourism sector, but their role is still limited to the informal sector.	Community participation is more active, especially in community-based tourism.
5.	Ecotourism and Sustainability	The concept of ecotourism is starting to develop, but it is not yet a top priority in tourism planning.	More developed with conservation-based ecotourism, such as in Siquijor and Pamilacan Island.
6.	Facilities and Infrastructure	Basic infrastructure, such as lodging and equipment rental, is available, but sanitation and clean water management improvements are needed.	Better planned tourist facilities, including eco-lodges and tourism information centers.
7.	Social and Economic Impacts	Tourism contributes to the local economy, but there are still challenges to the equitable distribution of economic benefits.	More positive economic impact on the community as the community-based tourism model is more developed.

Table 5 shows differences in managing small islands in Makassar City, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines, especially in government policy, environmental conservation, waste management, community participation, ecotourism, facilities, and social and economic impacts. In terms of government policy, small islands in Makassar City are still developing regulations related to environmentally-based tourism, with the leading role held by the Makassar City Government and the South Sulawesi Provincial Government. Meanwhile,

local government policies in Visayas are more stringent in regulating environmental conservation and sustainable tourism management. This can be seen from specific regulations that limit tourist activities to preserve the environment, such as those implemented in several conservation islands. A stronger regulatory approach in the Visayas helps protect the ecosystem and ensures that tourism does not harm the environment in the region. Regarding environmental conservation, Visayas is putting more effort into it than Makassar City. Some islands in the Visayas, such as Apo Island, have stringent conservation policies regarding protecting coral reefs and other marine ecosystems. This contributes to the sustainability of aquatic tourism and increases the attractiveness of tourists who care about ecotourism. In contrast, small islands in Makassar still face various challenges in environmental conservation, where ecosystem degradation still occurs due to uncontrolled tourism and development activities. An increase in the number of tourists not matched by strict regulations has led to various environmental problems, including damage to coastal ecosystems and marine pollution. Regarding waste management, the Visayas also has an advantage in implementing zero-waste programs in tourist destinations. The government and local communities are actively educating the public and tourists on the importance of plastic waste reduction and recycling. In contrast, the waste management system in the small islands of Makassar City still faces significant obstacles, where plastic pollution is still a serious problem in several tourist destinations. The lack of adequate waste management facilities and low awareness among tourists and local communities exacerbate this situation.

Community participation in the tourism sector also shows stark differences between the two regions. In Makassar City, local communities are involved in tourism activities. However, their role is still limited to the informal sector, such as small businesses in tourist equipment rental and food or souvenir sales. Meanwhile, community participation is much more active in Visayas through community-based tourism. This model allows local communities to take a more significant role in direct tourism management, including environmental conservation, destination operations, and equitable economic benefits. Communities in the Visayas have significant potential to benefit from the tourism sector, leading to sustainable improvements in their welfare. In terms of ecotourism and sustainability, the Visayas again excelled with destinations that embrace the concept of conservation-based tourism, as seen in Siquijor and Pamilacan Island. This approach allows the development of tourism that is not only economically beneficial but also maintains the balance of the ecosystem. In contrast, the concept of ecotourism in Makassar is still in its early stages and has not yet become a top priority in developing the tourism sector. This causes several tourist destinations in Makassar City to not have optimal planning in maintaining a balance between increasing the number of tourists and environmental sustainability. Facilities and infrastructure are also a differentiating factor between the two regions. In the Visayas, tourist facilities have been better developed, including eco-lodges, tourism information centers, and transport systems that better support tourist convenience. In contrast, small islands in Makassar City still face challenges regarding sanitation, access to clean water, and the quality of accommodation facilities. Some destinations in Makassar City have basic lodging and tourist equipment rental facilities. However, they still need a lot of improvement to align with sustainable tourism standards. This infrastructure gap also affects the attractiveness of destinations in the eyes of international tourists, where tourists tend to prefer destinations with more complete and environmentally friendly facilities.

Regarding social and economic impacts, differences in tourism management strategies in these regions also produce different effects. In Makassar City, the tourism sector contributes to the local economy, but the economic benefits are not evenly distributed throughout the community. There are still challenges in the equitable distribution of benefits, especially for local communities that have not been fully integrated into a more professional tourism system. Meanwhile, the community-based tourism model in the Visayas has more positive economic impacts on local communities. With the active involvement of the community in the tourism industry, they have more opportunities to earn income from the sector, either through their own businesses or collaborative programs with the local government. This makes tourism a sector that contributes to economic growth and directly improves community welfare. There are several perspectives for the improvement of governing sustainable tourism in small islands. First, increasing the capacity and capability of local governments through training, knowledge transfer, and adequate resource allocation will be critical. A sustainable tourism master plan must be created, along with improved enforcement of environmental regulations. Second, empowerment of local communities should be at the core of any governance initiative. As such, it can be achieved through the facilitation of active participation in planning and decision-making, the development of equitable community-based economies, and increased awareness and education on sustainable tourism practices.

Conclusion

This research analyzes how governing sustainable tourism is implemented in small islands in Makassar, Indonesia, and Visayas, Philippines. The study shows that Visayas has a more advanced approach to ecotourism management. Strict regulations related to environmental protection, a more effective waste management system, and active community involvement in community-based tourism have positively impacted the sustainability of tourism in the region. Whereas in Makassar City, although the number of tourists continues to increase, tourism management still faces challenges, especially in environmental conservation and equitable distribution of economic benefits for local communities. In addition, infrastructure and tourism support facilities in Makassar City still require improvement, especially in sanitation and clean water management, which play an essential role in maintaining the attractiveness of tourist destinations. The level of environmental awareness among local communities and tourists in Visayas is higher than in Makassar City. Educational programs on conservation and the implementation of community-based tourism in Visayas have increased collective awareness of maintaining the balance of the ecosystem. Meanwhile, in Makassar City, understanding the importance of ecotourism still needs to be improved through various training programs and more intensive environmental awareness campaigns. Therefore, to ensure that the growth of the tourism sector in Makassar not only has a positive impact on the economy, ecological sustainability, and community welfare, efforts are needed to improve environmental regulations, develop community-based ecotourism, and optimize sustainable tourism infrastructure and facilities. Furthermore, cross-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration through the Pentahelix model (government, academia, business, community, and media) can drive synergy and innovation. Using smart technologies can help manage resources better and improve the travel experience. There are also new ways to fund conservation efforts, like “blue finance” or tourism taxes. These ideas provide great opportunities for better resource management and

preservation. With a focus on developing diversified tourism products, promoting green tourism, and investing in climate-resilient infrastructure, the small islands of Makassar and the Visayas can build a more sustainable and inclusive tourism future. It is necessary to conduct a more in-depth study on the most appropriate sustainable tourism policy model to be applied in Makassar, considering local social, economic, and cultural factors. Further research could explore the long-term impacts of tourism on small island ecosystems, including the sustainability of natural resources and patterns of social change in coastal communities.

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Authors' Declarations and Essential Ethical Compliances

Authors' Contributions (in accordance with ICMJE criteria for authorship)

Contribution	*Author 1*	*Author 2*	*Author 3*
Conceived and designed the research or analysis	Yes	No	No
Collected the data	No	No	No
Contributed to data analysis and interpretation	Yes	Yes	Yes
Wrote the article/paper	Yes	Yes	Yes
Critical revision of the article/paper	No	Yes	Yes
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